CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND FORTIETH PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Thursday, 3 February 2000, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr. Harald Kreid (Austria)

GE.00-60439 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 840th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have one delegation inscribed on the list of speakers for today, and this is the delegation of Turkey. I therefore give the floor to Ambassador Sungar. You have the floor, Sir.

Mr. SUNGAR (Turkey): Mr. President, first of all, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at the beginning of this challenging session. I hope that your wide-ranging experience and positive approach will yield progress for our future work. I assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation as you discharge your important duties. I also wish to express our appreciation to the former President, the distinguished Ambassador of Australia, for his tireless efforts during the inter-sessional period.

Today I have the pleasure to inform the Conference that on 11 November 1999, the Turkish Grand National Assembly ratified the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. The instrument of ratification will be presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations shortly. As is known, according to article XIV of the Treaty, Turkey is one of the 44 States that have to ratify the CTBT so that it can enter into force. Therefore, we feel that we have fulfilled our obligation with regard to the objective of this Treaty, which is stipulated in its preamble as being "to contribute effectively to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, to the process of nuclear disarmament and therefore to the enhancement of international peace and security".

As a security-conscious State, due to its geographical location, where the risk of proliferation is comparatively higher, as well as its proximity to major regional conflicts, Turkey believes that the entry of the CTBT into force will significantly contribute to effective progress in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We therefore believe that a strong and sustained effort should be made by all concerned to ensure that the CTBT enters into force without delay.

I also wish to use this opportunity to express our concern with regard to the present situation in the CD. We believe more than ever that it is our common and shared responsibility to address the disarmament and arms control issues in an urgent manner. It is a fact that there still exist some different views among certain delegations on how to construct our work programme and on the substance of certain agenda items. However, we do believe that this should not prevent us from establishing mechanisms on those items that we have already agreed on, while deliberating on all other items simultaneously. It is neither for our benefit, nor for the international community's, to waste the past gains that we have obtained through a very difficult process. I could not agree more with our previous President when he said that the Conference could not credibly remain idle for another year.

In short, we are of the opinion that we should use every opportunity to move the CD forward to its substantive work by adopting flexible and result-oriented positions.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Turkey for his statement, which indeed was very welcome, and for the words he addressed to me.

Since I have no other speakers on the list, may I ask if any other delegation wants to take the floor? That does not seem to be the case. I would therefore, as I stated in the Presidential consultations yesterday, propose that we move immediately from this plenary meeting into informal open-ended consultations during which I will inform you of the options which I believe we have and will seek the views of delegations on how to proceed further with regard to the possible adoption of a work programme.

Does any delegation want to take the floor at this stage? If this is not the case, this concludes our formal business for today. We will convene the open-ended informal consultations in five minutes' time in this room.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 10 February, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.